



Farnham Geological Society
Next meeting at Farnham Maltings - Friday 17th May 2024
7:30pm for 8pm in the Barley Room

From Chalk to Peat - 100 million years in the Lambourn Valley
Lesley Dunlop

The River Lambourn, along with many other Berkshire Downs dip slope streams, flows SE along an almost linear valley. Over this area many of the streams follow a dominant SE alignment and it is likely that this relates to an underlying structural control.

It has a catchment which is approximately 30km length and 10km wide in West Berkshire Downs. The source of the River Lambourn is at Lynch Wood Springs, Lambourn, giving a length of approximately 23km although the perennial source is at West Shefford, 7km downstream. The upper part is a dry valley reaching up to the Ridgeway escarpment.

This talk will focus on the bedrock and also the evolution of the valley during periglacial times. This will include looking at the fields of sarsens near Ashdown House in the northern part and the Holocene peat deposit at Boxford. The peat at Boxford has accumulated in a deepened section of the valley close to a fault intersection where the river changes course slightly and gives evidence of climate change and human occupation during the Holocene.

Lesley Dunlop is a Geologist with over 40 years of experience who has most recently worked at Northumbria University lecturing in geology, geophysics and geoconservation. Recent research has used techniques such as palynology, ground penetrating radar and passive seimics. In addition to this she has led many field trips in the UK and Western Europe for universities, geology groups and others.

Also, Lesley is currently Chair of the Geological Society of London's Geoconservation Group, the Northern Regional Group, GeoConservation UK, and the English Geodiversity Forum and is active in local groups in Berkshire and Oxfordshire as well as ProGEO (International Geoheritage).